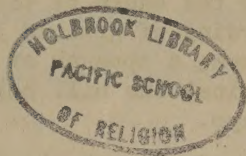


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YOSHIDA TAKES OVER KYODAN REINS

Rev. Mitsuho Yoshida became the 8th Moderator of The United Church of Christ in Japan upon election by the Standing Committee, meeting in Tokyo Thurs., Feb. 23. Yoshida's election followed the Standing Committee's acceptance of the resignation of Moderator Kiyoshi Ii in a series of moves aimed to loosen the knots that have snarled Kyodan affairs for the past year and a half.

Yoshida, 53, who was elected to the Standing Committee by the 1964 General Assembly, was named Vice Moderator by the Standing Committee in February 1970. He is pastor of Kochi Church in Shikoku and former moderator of the Shikoku district.

As the first item of business at the Feb. 23 meeting, the Standing Committee accepted Plan D, which had been discussed and agreed upon during a two-day discussion meeting, Feb. 21-22, at the national YWCA. Moderators or representatives of moderators of the Kyodan's sixteen districts, who had met on Mon., Feb. 20, participated in the discussions and attended the Feb. 23 meeting.

Plan D, which was passed by a vote 13 to 7 of the 20 Standing Committee members present (out of a total of 30 members), states that the Standing Committee accepts responsibility for events that have transpired since the 16th special General Assembly in 1969. However, it states, inasmuch as the resignation of the entire committee is not practical, the Moderator is to resign as an act symbolizing the corporate responsibility of the committee, and the Vice Moderator is to become Moderator. Recognizing that it will not be possible to convene the regular General Assembly, postponed from last fall, before the end of March, the Plan charges Yoshida with the responsibility of convening the General Assembly before the end of October, 1971.

To fill the vacancy left by the election of Yoshida to Moderator, the Standing Committee decided to name a gicho-hosa=assistant to the Moderator, until the status of the present Standing Committee members, whose two-year term officially ended last October, is clarified. Elected to serve in this position is Rev. Kichiya Kikuchi, 57, presently chairman of the Commission on Mission and Pastor of Shitaya Church, Tokyo.

Ii became moderator in the summer of 1969, following the death of former Moderator Suzuki. He had been Vice Moderator from 1966-68 and re-elected at the 1968 General Assembly. Prior to that he had served as Secretary of the General Assembly for two terms. He is pastor of Reinanzaka Church, Tokyo.

STAND-AND-BE-COUNTED ANTI-YASUKUNI RALLY

"Who are the 'we' who are to 'pacify the spirit of those who died in the war for the cause of the nation and to praise their great deeds'?" Questioning the wording of Article I of the proposed Yasukuni Shrine Bill was Rev. Takemitsu Ogawa, a speaker at a national stand-and-be-counted rally (chuo kekki taikai) against the bill held Sun., Feb. 21 at the Outdoor Auditorium of Hibiya Park, Tokyo.

Ogawa, who himself lost two brothers in the last war, was representing the voices of the Christian war bereaved when he answered his own question: "It is the same people that were the immediate sponsors of the last war who are today taking political initiative in introducing this bill. Their intention of justifying the past war is shown clearly here. Making gods of the war victims and celebrating them by means of taxes levied upon the people, all this is merely their cunning way of cheating the war survivors. The most important thing they can do is to do their best to avoid making more victims. Furthermore, why is the aim of the bill to deify only the military personnel who died actually involved in battle? Many civilians died in their homes because of airraids. Quite a number of people died in prison because of their convictions. Although in a way they were also victims, those servicemen were the ones who actually participated in killing millions of their fellow men, especially Asians. Who are we to praise these people, with no concern for the feelings of the war victims of Asian countries?"

The rally was attended by some 1,500 Christians, young and old, including more than thirty people who marched into Tokyo from all over Japan. Ten Hokkaido pastors arrived in five cars, decorated with banners and stickers, after spending five days and nights en route. Three representatives came from Kyushu, where four relays from Kagoshima, Nagasaki and Moji had converged. Three persons from a Hyogo group made a 100-kilometer march on foot from Kobe to Otsu.

All four non-government parties sent representatives to express their solidarity in opposition to the bill.

The rally approved a "protest" to be delivered to the Prime Minister. The protest makes the following three points:

Using political power to direct people to respect and maintain Yasukuni Shrine, which is a religious organization, is counter to Article 20 (Freedom of Faith) and Article 89 (Restrictions on the Disbursement of Public Money for Religious Organizations) of the National Constitution.

To "thank the spirit of the dead soldiers" and to "praise their deeds" is to sanction the war and to promote the militarization of Japan.

To introduce a bill that proposes making heroes of the dead Japanese soldiers and ignores the war victims of foreign countries constitutes an insult to the conscience of the Japanese people.

The whole group conducted a two-hour demonstration march after the rally, going first to the National Diet, then to Kasumigaseki, Shimbashi, Ginza and Tokyo station.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER MARCH 5

World Day of Prayer will be observed Fri., March 5 by more than 160 local groups of church women throughout Japan. The theme is "A New People for a New Age."

(continued)

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER MARCH 5 (continued)

In Tokyo, the interdenominational services will take place at Ohi Baptist Church at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Speaking at 2:00 will be Dr. Takaaki Aikawa, NCC vice chairman and professor, Kanto Gakuin University.

Although the observance of the Day was started by Protestant women, there has been some active Catholic participation in recent years. In Kobe and several other cities, Catholic women are serving on the preparation committee this year.

TUTS ZENKYOTO DISBANDS: correction and note

Our attention has been called to a mistake in fact in the story titled "Zenkyoto Disbands" on page 1 of the Feb. 12 issue, No. 382.

With reference to paragraph two, what emerged in May 1969 was the Yasukuni Bampaku Kyoto Kaigi (Yasukuni Expo joint struggle committee), not the TUTS zengaku kyoto kaigi (zenkyoto), which was organized in March 1970, after the riot police entered the campus.

In the article, no implication that the TUTS struggle is responsible for the continuing unrest in the Kyodan was intended. Obviously, behind the fact that five districts have not yet elected General Assembly delegates and the General Assembly has been postponed are many complex situations and causes.

UNIVERSITY APPLICANTS UP

As students and faculty geared for the annual ordeal of entrance exams and the subsequent joys and sorrows, seven Christian universities out of eight questioned reported number of applicants up over last year. Kwansei Gakuin and Kanto Gakuin held tests the first week in February, with other schools scheduled to conduct them before the end of the month. The following figures show numbers of applicants, admissions and ratios (1970 figures are in parentheses).

	No. of Applicants	No. of Admissions	Over-all Ratio
Aoyama Gakuin	34,107 (29,400)	1,555	1:22
Doshisha	42,546 (50,303)	2,900	1:14.6
International Christian University	1,275 (1,084)	250	1:5.1
Kanto Gakuin	5,460 (4,243)	880	1:6.2
Kwansei Gakuin	34,076 (14,676)	7,461	1:4.6
Meiji Gakuin	14,901 (14,834)	900	1:16.5
Rikkyo	34,765 (31,282)	2,235	1:15.5
Tokyo Women's Christian College	3,217 (1,532)	460	1:6.9

There is of course a wide range in the number of admissions, as well as the ratio of admissions to applicants, from department to department within the same school. For instance, at Aoyama, the figures range from a ratio of one out of 30 in the economics department, to one out of 13 in the department of science and technology.

LAYMEN COMING AND LAYMEN GOING

Ministries to and of laymen abroad in Asia will be the subject of a meeting to be held at International House of Japan, Tue., March 16, under the sponsorship of the Divisions of Mission and Service of the NCC and the five English-speaking churches of Tokyo.

Discussion will follow the dinner meeting, which begins at 6:00. Topics to be discussed, in addition to general policies, include: 1) the ministry to foreign laymen in Japan; 2) the ministry of Japanese Christians going abroad; 3) the ministry to American servicemen in Japan; 4) the cooperation of laymen for Asian development. Reservations for the dinner meeting can be made through NCC/J office. The price is ¥1,500 per person.

The Tokyo meeting is an outgrowth of the recent East Asia Christian Conference meeting in Hong Kong, at which national consultations were encouraged.

BAPTIST PASTORS' RETREAT, by Noboru Hojo, chairman, Baptist Union Pastors' Assn.

"Contemporary Society and the Restoration of Man's Humanity" was the theme of the annual Japan Baptist Union pastors retreat Feb. 10-13 at Waseda Hoshien. Some forty pastors attended.

Rev. Yoshikazu Aoki, of Kashima, put the theme in the concrete terms of his own parish, which was a small country village fifteen years ago. Now it is becoming an industrialized city of 300,000. The accompanying changes have made Aoki reexamine his convictions regarding his faith and his view of the ministries of the church. As a result, Aoki expounded the necessity of interpreting the Gospel in the modern sense.

On the Feb. 11, National Foundation Day, the pastors took part in the rally at Chiyoda Public Hall to protest the Yasukuni Shrine nationalization bill. Prof. Saburo Ienaga cited trends toward a revival of thought control.

Topics discussed by the retreat included factors that limit the power of the Gospel and the future training of pastors, with reference to the Kanto Gakuin Theological Department, whose future function is not yet clearly determined.

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS BIBLE SEMINARS

Two national Bible Study Seminars will be held simultaneously in Tozanso and Kyoto in late March, an innovation in the 12-year-old history of the SCM-sponsored studies. The schedules are:

March 23-26	Tozanso, Gotemba	90 university students
March 22-24	Arashiyama, Kyoto	60 university students

At Tozanso, "Faith that lives in the present age--why can't we interpret the signs of the times?", will be the theme. Prof. Sadao Asami, Tohoku Gakuin, an outstanding Old Testament scholar, will lecture on "Time and History in the Old Testament." Asami will present his view that "some of the prophets, like Job, never had a sense of history." Another lecturer, Prof. Taira Kuratsuka, in a presentation on "Radicalism as seen in Thomas Muntzer of the German Reformation," will strike out at present radicals in "an attempt to make their original motivation bear fruit." Kuratsuka is professor at Meiji University.

The Kyoto Seminar theme, "The Word that gives us life," will combine group Bible study with lectures by Prof. Motoi Takamichi of Doshisha University, Prof. Wataru Hoyo of Williams Theological Seminary, Rev. Hiraku Murata of Shinmorishoji Church and Rev. Keigo Osumi of Kanazawa Nanbu Church.

Applicants may get further information and apply to the Japan YMCA at the Japan Christian Center in Tokyo for the Tozanso meeting, and at Seiko Church, 2 Matsugasaki Hinouecho, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto for the Arashiyama meeting.

"SHALOM" - COFFEE HOUSE MINISTRY

A new experimental coffee house ministry opened in Osaka, Sat., Jan. 23. Named "Shalom," the project is dedicated to proving a setting for in-depth communication in the midst of a crowded industrial area in Japan's second largest city. The House is located in the Mead Christian Social Center, on the west side of Juso Park.

The Shalom Coffee House will be open every Saturday night from six to nine, with a special program every fourth Saturday.

The project is being sponsored jointly by the Mead Center, a social center related to the Japan Baptist Union, and the Kanzakigawa House Church of The United Church of Christ in Japan. Since October, a steering committee composed of neighborhood laymen, young labor leaders, university students and professionals in various fields has been drawing up plans for Shalom. Non-Christians are playing a large and vital part in the sponsoring group.

A mixed crowd of 200 guests who attended Shalom's opening on the 23rd is cited as an example of the kind of dialogue among persons of various vocations and interests that Shalom will promote. Attending were a TV commentator, Japanese FM radio deejays, labor union members and workers from various companies, company managers, students, retired persons from various professions, local ministers, and church youth.

Commenting on what makes Shalom different from thousands of other coffee shops in Japan, many of which are very elaborate and successful, Rev. Satoshi Hirata of Kanzakigawa Church said, "First, Shalom is non-profit and relies entirely on volunteer help. Our waiters and waitresses and kitchen helpers are divided into four shifts and work alternate week-ends. As our guests number about 75 each evening, waiters and waitresses find time to sit and talk with our guests. The homey candlelight atmosphere and the decorations, created by the young participants, seem to encourage freedom of talk and movement."

Hirata explained that there is very little structured program. Folk song groups show up for spontaneous sings, amateur poets come to read their creations or hang them on the wall. Other groups and individuals are asking if they can share their talents.

Miss Chiaki Okamoto, director of Mead Center, says that the original nucleus of 20 committee members and volunteer workers has grown to 50. "I hope that more and more workers of the densely populated Juso area will find their way to the coffee house," she said.

A member of the steering committee, was asked what frustrations the committee experienced in working out plans for Shalom. He said, "Of course when you have people with this wide a background trying to work together creatively, there is bound to be some friction. Some would like more structure in the program, some less. Some like loud rock music as background for go-go dancing, others go in for quiet mood music conducive to dialogue. But these differences only strengthen our depth in understanding one another, and we feel that bridges are being built that could not otherwise have been built."

Future tentative plans include game room, an original drama on pollution, an amateur 16 mm. film on the individual within mass groups and organizations in Japan, space for hanging the work of amateur artists--and plenty of time for coffee and dialogue.

(by Rev. John B. Walker)

HEADLINE-MAKING EVENTS

. . . compiled by Ichiji Yokota

MINISTER OF JUSTICE KOBAYASHI RESIGNED to "take responsibility" for remarks about Diet sessions and government policies felt to be derogatory in an address he made supporting re-election of Shizuoka Governor.

TOKYO POPULATION IS 11.4 MILLION AS OF JAN. 1, 1971, but increase of 91,450 in last year indicates slowdown in comparison with previous annual average increase of 100,000.

STRONG RESISTANCE OF LOCAL FARMERS, BACKED BY STUDENTS, is delaying requisition of land for new international airport at Narita in Chiba. Prefectural Governor Tomono announced requisition would begin Feb. 22 but operation requires literally digging out opponents who have dug in, in trenches in the ground.

BILL PROMOTING EMPLOYMENT OF MIDDLE-AGED AND ELDERLY-- 45 to 65-- is approved by Cabinet and presented to Diet. To replace unemployment relief projects for the elderly, the bill offers subsidies for retraining for private employment and benefits for unemployed between ages of 45 and 65.

PLANS FOR THE EMPEROR AND EMPRESS TO VISIT EUROPE this fall have been announced. Emperor visited Europe when Crown Prince 50 years ago. Prospective trip to England, West Germany, Belgium, France, Holland, Denmark and Switzerland would be first trip abroad for an Emperor during his reign.

NAGOYA MATSUZAKAYA DEPARTMENT STORE IS CAPITALIZING ON fossils discovered on its staircase of marble, imported from China 46 years ago. Schoolboys and scientists are flocking to see the rare petrified ammonite and ancient sea weed fossils, discovered by chance by an employee.

SALE TO FORMER OWNERS AT 1951 PRICES OF LAND REFORM PLOTS unused as yet is meeting opposition, although Supreme Court ruled it was proper for government to do so with land bought under agricultural reform plan but not used. Criticism of the plan has come from persons within LDP as well as from opposition parties and general public. Government is attempting to amend present agricultural law and to guard against profiteering among those who buy their land back at the old prices.